

AMENDMENT
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B₂ magnitudes from a threshold for the lower gradation and in the order of decreasing magnitudes from a threshold for the higher gradation.

Page 26, in the substitute specification please delete the 5th first full paragraph and replace it with the following new paragraph:

If the low-frequency component is weighted according to human visual characteristics and then extracted, the convolution process in a real space can also be used for the extraction instead of filtering in a frequency space as described above.

B₃ Page 31, in the substitute specification please delete the 2nd first full paragraph and replace it with the following new paragraph:

B₄ According to such a modification, in step S9 (third step) shown in FIG. 3, of the low-frequency component data L at the respective unwhitening pixel positions calculated in step S8, the position of a whitening candidate pixel whose value is greatest, ie., whose low-frequency component data power value is strongest or whose low-frequency component intensity is strongest, may be determined by the whitening pixel determining unit (corresponding to the blackening pixel determining unit 46 in FIG. 2) as a pixel to be whitened next (whitening pixel). In step S25 (second step) shown in FIG. 12, the position of a pixel whose low-frequency component data is greatest (strongest) may be determined as the position of a pixel to be whitened next.

Page 31, in the substitute specification please delete the 3rd first full paragraph and replace it with the following new paragraph:

B In the meantime, only a certain dot arrangement (binary pattern, dot pattern, halftone dot configuration, white-and-black pattern) at a certain halftone percentage (a threshold for a certain gradation) may be chosen as the most suitable dot arrangement by a certain method. Even in such case, threshold arrangements can be determined as follows.

Page 32, in the substitute specification please delete the 1st first full paragraph and replace it with the following new paragraph:

B FIG. 13 is illustrative of a process of determining the position of the threshold Th at a higher gradation and the position of the threshold Tl at a lower gradation when the dot pattern of the threshold Tfix for a certain gradation has been determined.

Page 32, in the substitute specification please delete the 2nd first full paragraph and replace it with the following new paragraph:

B The process shown in FIG. 13 includes steps S31 - S41 (A process Aa corresponds to step S35, a process Ba1 corresponds to step S37, a process Ba2 corresponds to step S38, and a process Ba3 corresponds to step S39) which are identical to steps S1 - S11 shown in FIG. 3, and steps S45 - S51 (A process Ab corresponds to step S45, a process Bb1 corresponds to step S47, a process Bb2 corresponds to step S48, and a process Bb3 corresponds to step S49) which are identical to steps S5 - S11 shown in FIG. 3. Therefore, these steps will not be described in detail below.

Page 36, in the substitute specification please delete the 3rd first full paragraph and replace it with the following new paragraph: